

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SNAPPER GROUPEL COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**SEPTEMBER 2020**  
**(meeting held via webinar)**

The Committee approved minutes from the June 2020 meeting and the agenda for the September 2020 Committee meeting.

**Status of Amendments under Formal Review**

NMFS SERO staff updated the Committee on the status of amendments under review or recently submitted:

- Regulatory Amendment 33 (Red Snapper Seasons): Final rule package has been sent to NMFS Headquarters.
- Abbreviated Framework 3 (Catch Levels for Blueline Tilefish): The final rule published on 7/16/20 and regulations became effective on 8/17/20.
- Regulatory Amendment 34 (SMZs in NC & SC): The amendment was submitted to NMFS on 8/11/20. NMFS is preparing the proposed rule package.

**Review of Red Snapper 2020 Recreational Season**

Council staff provided a summary of catch and effort data provided by the four South Atlantic states during the 2020 Red Snapper recreational season. Preliminary estimates from Florida suggest that 33,838 Red Snapper were harvested by private recreational anglers and 2,929 Red Snapper were harvested by charter boats. Council staff also updated the Committee on data obtained through the MyFishCount program. Note that the recreational ACL for red snapper in the South Atlantic is 29,656 fish.

**Wreckfish ITQ Modernization (Amendment 48)**

The Committee discussed the options paper for the modernization of the Wreckfish ITQ program. In September 2019, the Council approved the review of the Wreckfish ITQ program and directed staff to prepare an options paper for an amendment, including an action to modify the goals and objectives of the Snapper Grouper FMP by adopting those developed in the 2016-2020 Vision Blueprint for the Snapper Grouper Fishery. At this meeting, the Committee requested that staff convene a webinar meeting with Wreckfish ITQ shareholders and Wreckfish wholesale dealers prior to the December 2020 Council meeting to discuss the actions proposed in the options paper and make recommendations to the Council for potential additional actions. The Committee also requested that the group also discuss the possibility of requiring VMS on vessels participating in the Wreckfish fishery. The Committee decided to wait until the December 2020 meeting to consider Amendment 48 for public scoping in winter 2021. In addition, at the December 2020 meeting, the Committee requests that SERO staff deliver a presentation on how similar programs are administered in the Gulf of Mexico, including how cost recovery might be applied to the South Atlantic Wreckfish ITQ Program, issues surrounding the Wreckfish Permit and whether it is needed in the South Atlantic, and how electronic reporting could be implemented for the fishery.

### **Red Porgy (Amendment 50)**

At the June 2020 meeting, the Council directed staff to begin work on an amendment to end overfishing of Red Porgy, revise the rebuilding schedule, and address modifications to sector allocations and management measures. At this meeting, staff presented an overview of the options paper and requested guidance from the Committee on possible actions and a range of alternatives to develop for consideration at the December 2020 meeting. The Committee made no changes to the options presented but requested more information on whether a recreational ACT was needed. In addition, the Committee requested that the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) provide recommendations on possible changes to management measures, including bag and trip limits, and seasonal/spawning closures. It was noted that commercial management measures for Red Porgy were recently modified with implementation of Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27. A draft timeline was presented that would complete development of the amendment by the statutory deadline of June 2022.

### **Topics for November 2020 Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Meeting**

The Snapper Grouper AP's scheduled April 2020 was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The AP is scheduled to meet via webinar on November 4-6, 2020. Topics the Council approved for the AP's agenda are:

- Red Snapper fishery performance report
- Management measures for Red Porgy
- Recommendations on proposed ecosystem component species
- Use of descending devices
- Update on CitSci Projects
- Update on MyFishCount
- Input for Recreational Management Issues Webinar
- Update on Council Activities related to Climate Change

### **Other Business**

There was no Committee discussion under Other Business.

**Timing and Tasks:**

**MOTION: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- Prepare draft Red Porgy amendment for review at the December 2020 meeting.
- Prepare analysis to show length of commercial Red Porgy season under potential new ACL using average catch rates from recent years to present to the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel in November 2020 and request recommendations on possible modifications to management measures.
- Request presentation from SERO to inform potential actions in Wreckfish ITQ Modernization Amendment (Amendment 48) for the December 2020 meeting.
- Convene a meeting of the Wreckfish ITQ shareholders and Wreckfish wholesale dealers via webinar ahead of the December 2020 meeting.
- Prepare the Wreckfish ITQ Modernization Amendment (Amendment 48) to be considered for scoping at the December 2020 meeting.
- Approve the list of topics for the AP meeting.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**